



The Nuffield Bursary Scheme

Elizabeth Cullen, Head of Chemistry and coordinator of science college projects at Helsby High School in Cheshire, explains how the scheme is making an impact.

We have been involved with the Nuffield Bursary Scheme for many years and value its contribution in enriching our students' scientific opportunities. As a science college with a large sixth form, sciences are popular at A-level, and there are always lots of students interested in the scheme. Several of our students gain bursaries each year and we are grateful for the SSAT's support, which enables more students from science colleges to participate.

The scheme has many benefits, including the opportunity to work on the latest developments in science and technology under the guidance of experts in their field.

Student Jonathan Benwell says: 'Nanoparticle research is at the forefront of technology so being able to experience and learn about this field was extremely exciting. I produced various samples of these microscopic metals and examined them under a transmission electron microscope. This experience has widened my scientific knowledge and provided me with an insight into a field at the forefront of science.'

Beth Braidwood carried out a project at AstraZeneca. She says: 'My project involved looking at cancer proteins and finding molecules that fit into these proteins to use as possible cures for cancer. I gained experience in a department at the forefront of cancer research.'

Students develop many skills to a high level, particularly initiative, innovative and problem-solving skills. The scheme provides opportunities to challenge and extend the very brightest students. Students obtain gold CREST awards, which are very highly thought of by employers and higher education institutions. The projects give personal statements on UCAS applications an extra edge and have formed the basis for university interviews. Feedback from universities is that they have been impressed by the knowledge and enthusiasm with which students talk about their projects and we feel this helps in securing the offer of a place.

It can also help students decide on their choice of career. Edward Brett carried out a project investigating how matter reacts with gamma radiation. 'The project gave me an insight into how physics research is carried out. I am now applying to study physics at university and this placement has helped me come to this decision.'

It is reassuring to know that the scientific future of the country will

be in good hands. As Matthew Jones commented after completing a project at Liverpool University, 'I have been able to get an excellent hands-on experience on the use of science in the real world, especially in an area of science I feel so passionate about. It was great to be treated as a scientist and take part in investigations that could well forward the world of science in the future.'

Find out more

The Nuffield Foundation is working with the SSAT to offer two Nuffield Science Bursary placements to every science specialist school with post-16 students. In order to apply for the scheme, students must be in their first year of an advanced or higher-level science course.

Due to high demand, bursaries will be allocated to schools on a first come first served basis. If you are interested in two bursary placements for summer 2008 or for further information, please contact Jo Oladejo by 1 February 2008 on 0207 636 4612 or by email (joladejo@nuffieldfoundation.org).